



United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240



NOV 1 - 2004

PEP - ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT MEMORANDUM NO. ESM04-9

To: Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: Willie R. Taylor, Director *Willie R. Taylor*
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance

Subject: Procedures for Review and Approval of Bureau NEPA Chapters (516 DM 8-15),
Handbooks, Categorical Exclusions, and Other Procedures

Bureaus must have the approval of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) before publishing changes to their chapters in the Departmental Manual (516 DM 8-15), handbooks, categorical exclusions, and other procedures for implementing CEQ Regulations. Authority is contained in CEQ Regulations at 40 CFR 1507.3.

Bureaus should contact OEPC when they contemplate preparing and publishing any of the subject documents. The OEPC will assign the matter to the Natural Resources Management Team member who normally works with the originating bureau.

When a draft document has reached the point where it is ready for publication in the Federal Register or the Departmental manual as a proposal, it will be made available to OEPC for review and circulation to CEQ. The OEPC will forward the draft to CEQ requesting their review and approval. Upon receipt of that approval or recommended changes, OEPC will contact the bureau with an approval to publish or with a request to consider and implement any changes from CEQ or OEPC. Following acceptance of the revision, the bureau will be given its approval to publish by OEPC. OEPC is available to facilitate any meetings between the bureau and CEQ. If a bureau arranges and conducts its own meetings with CEQ, it must keep OEPC informed of any critical issues and the outcome.

After publication of the draft, consideration of public comments, and revision, the bureau will again submit its proposed final copy to OEPC for OEPC and CEQ review and approval. In a manner identical to that described above in the third paragraph, OEPC will seek CEQ approval and will convey approval or recommended changes back to the bureau. When all changes have been acted upon, OEPC will give a clearance to publish a final document.

This memorandum replaces ESM94-16.